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TWO CHARGED IN PUBLIC CORRUPTION INDICTMENT

Hammond, Indiana- The United States Attorney's Office announced that the following:

Gerardo "Jerry" Lozano, 34, of Hobart, Indiana, and Francisco "Frank" Ramirez, 49, of East Chicago, Indiana, were charged in an Indictment returned on March 8, 2012 and unsealed today.

Lozano is charged with one count of paying a bribe to an agent to a local government receiving federal funds. Count One alleges that Lozano provided free home renovations at the home the Treasurer for the School City of East Chicago. In exchange for the bribe, Lozano received contracts and money from the School City.

Ramirez is charged with receipt of a bribe by an agent of a local government receiving federal funds. Count Two alleges that Ramirez received free home renovations from Lozano's business Greentree Builders. In exchange for the renovations, Ramirez authorized contracts and payments to Greentree Builders.

United States Attorney David Capp stated, "This indictment is a result of the ongoing public corruption effort by the United States Attorney's Office and its law enforcement partners. We will continue to aggressively investigate allegations of using a public position for private gain and, where appropriated, seek federal indictments. Our investigation continues."

Lozano and Ramirez had their initial appearance before Magistrate Judge Paul Cherry today. Arraignment has been set for 3/21/12 at 2:00 PM in the US District Court – Hammond.

These charges were filed as the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, the Department of Labor, Office of the Inspector General and the Indiana State Police. This case has been assigned to and will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Gary Bell.

The specific sentence in each case to be imposed upon conviction will be determined by the judge after a consideration of federal sentencing statutes and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines.

The United States Attorney's Office emphasized that an Indictment is merely an allegation and that all persons charged are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.